BLACK PANTHER

POWER
PART 1

Since the dawn of time, the proud African warrior nation of Wakanda has evolved as a high-tech, resource-rich, ecologically sound paradise unmatched anywhere else in the world. Their ruler is the Black Panther, Wakanda's religious, political, and military leader and the embodiment of the ideals of the nation.

For many years King T'Challa held the mantle of Black Panther and led his nation through much conflict. Mortally wounded in an assassination attempt, his life hung by a thread, and with it, the fate of Wakanda.

A new Black Panther had to rise up to defend the people. Shuri, T'Challa's younger sister, filled the vacancy and not only saved Wakanda from Morlun, who came to feast on the Panther totem, but helped bring her brother's spirit back from Limbo and the brink of Death. The day was won, but not without heavy Wakandan casualties.

The mantle of Black Panther has been passed on and Shuri must take up the responsibility of leading her people and defending her country.

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SON OF WAKANDA
PROTECTOR OF THE NATION
WARRIOR AND FRIEND
WARRIOR OF WAKANDA
KEEPER OF THE SPEAR OF BASHENGA
CHAMPION AND FRIEND
"MY FELLOW WAKANDANS...
"I SEE BEFORE ME A SEA OF STONE."

MORE THAN FIVE HUNDRED MONUMENTS CARVED WITH THE NAMES OF OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS, OUR SONS AND DAUGHTERS, OUR FAMILY, OUR FRIENDS.
TAKEN FROM US. STOLEN FROM US IN A WAVE OF TERROR AND VIOLENCE UNLIKE ANYTHING THAT HAS EVER TROUBLED THE STREETS OF OUR LAND.
FOR TEN THOUSAND YEARS, OUR PEOPLE HAVE BEEN FREE, BEEN STRONG. FOR ONE HUNDRED CENTURIES WE'VE STOOD AGAINST TERROR AND ATTACK AND INVASION.
BUT CIRCUMSTANCE HAS SLIPPED A DAGGER OF DOUBT BENEATH OUR NATIONAL AND CULTURAL ARMOR AND PIERCED OUR HEARTS.
WE ARE AT A CROSSROADS. A CROSSROADS THAT WILL DEFINE WHO WE ARE AS A PEOPLE AND WHAT OUR ROLE IS IN THE FUTURE OF OUR NATION.
YOU LOOK AT ME AND YOU SEE THE LITTLE SISTER TO OUR NATION'S GREAT HERO. YOU SEE A WOMAN, A DAUGHTER. YOU SEE A SINGLE FIST RAISED AGAINST A SEA OF ENEMIES, AND A SINGLE VOICE SHOUTING AT THE WINDS OF TERRIBLE DISORDER.
LISTEN TO ME, O WAKANDA...
I AM NEITHER GIRL, NOR WOMAN, NOR SISTER, NOR DAUGHTER, NOR FRAGILE VOICE IN A RAGING STORM...

I AM WAKANDAN!
AND I AM NOT ALONE!
POWER
PART 1

WVOX
...THERE'S BEEN A LOT OF MUTTERING FOLLOWING THE ATTACK LAST MONTH AND THE PRINCESS REGENT'S SPEECH LAST WEEK. PEOPLE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT A CHANGE OF POWER AT SO CRUCIAL A TIME.
THERE'S ALWAYS COFFEEHOUSE CHATTER ABOUT POLITICS, BIG OR SMALL.
I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT IDLE INTELLECTUALS POSING HYPOTHETICALS OVER THEIR DECAF LATTÉS, M'TOKA. THESE ARE INFORMED CITIZENS EXPRESSING REAL CONCERNS ABOUT POLICY CHANGES DURING A TIME OF NATIONAL CRISIS.
"INFORMED" CITIZENS? YOU'RE TAKING A PAGE FROM MY BOOK, N'DEGA. YOU'VE ALWAYS CRITICIZED ME AND MY--WHAT WAS YOUR PHRASE? "DISGRUNTLED LIBERAL SLACKERS."
WE'RE NOT TALKING LIBERALS, M'TOKA--OR EVEN CONSERVATIVES FOR THAT MATTER. THESE ARE VOICES FROM ACROSS WAKANDA THAT ARE CONCERNED ABOUT A YOUNG AND UNTRIED PERSON STEPPING INTO THE SHOES OF A SEASONED LEADER.
YOU MEAN A WOMAN STEPPING INTO A MAN'S SHOES?

I NEVER SAID THAT.
THIS ISN'T ABOUT GENDER. IT'S ABOUT WHOSE EXPERIENCE MATTERS MOST.
KING T'CHALLA STEPPED DOWN--
UNDER SUSPICIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES. HAS ANYONE ASKED HIM WHO ATTACKED HIM? WHY HAS OUR NEW 'PRINCESS REGENT' NOT DEMANDED AN ANSWER?
I'M SURE THE ROYAL FAMILY KNOWS EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED.
HAVE SOME PATIENCE, N'DEGA. WHEN THE PRINCESS REGENT RETURNS FROM HER VISIT TO AMERICA THERE WILL BE A PRESS RELEASE THAT WILL MAKE EVERYTHING CLEAR...

"...THESE ARE NEW TIMES. EVERYTHING IS CHANGING FOR THE BETTER..."
I APPRECIATE THE GRAVITY AND DELICACY OF THIS SITUATION, PRINCESS SHURI. YOU HAVE MY HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES ON THE LOSSES YOUR NATION HAS SUFFERED...
...MY BEST WISHES FOR THE SPEEDY RECOVERY OF YOUR BROTHER.
AND MY GRATITUDE FOR THIS GOODWILL VISIT AS THE NEW WAKANDAN HEAD OF STATE.
THANK YOU, MR. PRESIDENT. IT'S BEEN AN HONOR TO MEET YOU. MY BROTHER SPEAKS SO HIGHLY OF YOU.
PRINCESS REGENT...A WORD?

PRINCESS WILL DO. OR "YOUR HIGHNESS".
ER...I'M EVERETT ROSS WITH THE STATE DEPARTMENT, HIGHNESS. THE PRESIDENT HAS ASKED ME TO SERVE AS YOUR LIAISON DURING YOUR VISIT HERE.
I KNOW WHO YOU ARE, MR. ROSS. MY BROTHER BRIEFED ME. HE SAID THAT YOU WERE A GOVERNMENT SPOOK, BUT "OCCASIONALLY USEFUL."
I TAKE IT YOU'VE BEEN ASSIGNED TO SPY ON ME.
"SPY." SUCH AN UGLY WORD.
BUT ACCURATE?
IT'S NOT ENTIRELY INACCURATE.
HONESTY. IN WASHINGTON.
MY, THERE REALLY HAS BEEN A CHANGE.

...DO YOU HAVE ANY LEADS AS TO WHO ATTACKED YOUR BROTHER?
AN INVESTIGATION IS UNDERWAY.
AND IS *THAT* WHY YOU'RE HERE, HIGHNESS?
I'M HERE ON A DIPLOMATIC MISSION AS THE NEWLY APPOINTED HEAD OF STATE.
REALLY? IF IT WAS *MY* BROTHER WHO HAD BEEN NEARLY KILLED, I THINK I'D MOVE HEAVEN AND EARTH TO FIND OUT WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE. NO MATTER WHAT IT TOOK, AND NO MATTER WHERE IT TOOK ME.
EVEN TO THE SHORES OF A FRIENDLY NATION.
BUT THAT'S JUST *ME*. I'M NOT A HEAD OF STATE.

DIPLOMACY IS A TRICKY THING, HIGHNESS. THERE ARE A LOT OF THINGS THAT A SITTING PRESIDENT CAN'T DIRECTLY SAY TO A VISITING PEER.
JUST AS THERE ARE THINGS A VISITING HEAD OF STATE CANNOT DISCUSS OPENLY WITH THE PRESIDENT OF A HOST NATION.
THAT'S WHERE GOVERNMENT "SPOOKS" LIKE ME COME IN. I CAN DISCUSS POLITICS ABSTRACTLY.
FOR EXAMPLE, I COULD SAY--JUST AS A TRUISM, YOU UNDERSTAND--THAT VIGILANTISM BY FOREIGN NATIONALS IS FROWNED UPON ON U.S. SOIL. FRIENDS DON'T BRING THEIR VENDETTAS TO OUR SHORES.
FRIENDS OPENLY ASK FOR HELP.
I APPRECIATE YOUR CANDOR, MR. ROSS. HOWEVER, TO BE EQUALLY FRANK, I'M NEW TO MY POSITION AS PRINCESS REGENT.
I'M STILL NOT ENTIRELY SURE WHO MY FRIENDS ARE.
I CAN'T SPEAK FOR THE PRESIDENT, BUT IT'S MY VIEW THAT THE CURRENT ADMINISTRATION WOULD BE WILLING TO COOPERATE WITH ANY OPEN INVESTIGATION...
...AND UNWILLING TO LOOK THE OTHER WAY IN MATTERS OF VIGILANTISM.
I'LL BEAR THAT IN MIND, MR. ROSS--IF I EVER CONSIDER BECOMING A VIGILANTE.
THAT'S ALL I ASK, HIGHNESS. I HOPE YOU WILL TAKE SOME TIME TO GET TO KNOW AMERICA. THE THEATERS, THE MUSEUMS, THE NIGHT LIFE.
TARGET ACQUIRED.
ROGER THAT.
COPY, RED. YOU ARE AUTHORIZED TO GO WEAPONS HOT.
IF YOU LET YOUR HAIR DOWN THIS PLACE CAN BE A REAL BLAS--

WHAKOOM!
TAKE 'EM ALL OUT! NO SURVIVORS!
MOVE!
BA-NOOM!

MEANWHILE IN WAKANDA...
MY PRINCE, THE DOCTOR SAYS THAT THIS IS TOO SOON. YOU CAN'T RISK YOUR HEALTH.
I APPRECIATE YOUR CONCERN.
LEAVE ME.
I TRIED, MAJESTY...
UNNHHH!
WHUMP

IT'S TOO SOON, MY LOVE. THE DOCTOR SAID IT WOULD BE MONTHS BEFORE YOU COULD EVEN THINK ABOUT REHAB.
YOU'RE STILL TOO WEAK.
TOO WEAK?
WE'LL SEE.

WHERE'S THE WOMAN?
THERE'S TOO MUCH SMOKE.
FIND HER!
UNLESS YOU WANT TO DIE, PENCIL-NECK...
GG-GGAAA-CCKK!
TELL ME WHERE THE PRINCESS IS.
LAST CHANCE. WHERE IS SHE?
SHRAAAK

THAT'S NOT THE PRINCESS!
NO! IT'S--

FF-ZZ-ZAT
WHUP
ZZZ
ZZ
CRUNCH!
KRAK!
WHAK!

UNNNH!
DUMB MOVE, GIRL. NEVER THROW YOUR WEAPONS AWAY.
WHAT THE--?
KRAKK!
CRUNCH!

FWOOM!

I WANT EVERYTHING BEFORE WE LOSE CONTROL OF THE SCENE. STRIP OFF ALL THE EQUIPMENT, TAKE TISSUE SAMPLES--THE WORKS.
YES, MAJESTY.
MAJESTY, THERE'S SOMETHING STRANGE HERE--
WHOOSH!!!
INFERNO FAILSAFES HAVE BEEN ACTIVATED. THEY WON'T EVEN BE ABLE TO COLLECT DNA.
WE CAPTURED VIDEO AND TELEMETRIC FEEDS. WE HAVE A COMPLETE ANALYSIS OF HER COSTUME, WEAPONS, AND EQUIPMENT.
EXCELLENT. THIS WENT EXACTLY AS PLANNED.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONCERN, MR. PRESIDENT. I ASSURE YOU THAT I--AND MY PEOPLE--ARE FINE, AND I'M GLAD TO HEAR THAT THE SECRET SERVICE AGENTS IN THE LEAD VEHICLE WILL RECOVER. THOUGH I'M AFRAID YOUR MAN ROSS MAY NEED A FEW DAYS OFF TO COLLECT HIMSELF.
EMBASSY
YES...AND MY BEST TO YOUR FAMILY AS WELL.
KLIK
OKAY--WHAT DO WE KNOW?
I'VE SEEN THIS BEFORE. AN INFERNO FAILSAFE. IT BURNS ALL MATTER DOWN TO THE ATOMIC LEVEL.
WHAT ABOUT THE MACHINERY? WE HAVE FRAGMENTS OF BOMB CASINGS, PIECES OF THEIR EQUIPMENT KNOCKED LOOSE DURING THE FIGHT.
THAT'S MORE PROMISING, MAJESTY. THERE ARE NO SERIAL NUMBERS, OF COURSE, BUT WE'RE RUNNING METALLURGIC SCANS AND GAS CHROMATOGRAPHY. IF NOTHING ELSE, WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO ESTABLISH A STARTING POINT WITH WHOEVER MADE THE RAW MATERIALS.
MAJESTY, WE MAY HAVE A LEAD, BUT IT'S A LEAD THAT'S MAKING ME SWEAT BLOOD.
BEFORE THE FAILSAFES IGNITED, I TOOK A SPECTROMETER READING ON THE WEAPON CONFIGURATION.
THE WRIST CANNONS ARE REMARKABLY SIMILAR TO FLIGHT SUIT BACKUP WEAPONS BY OUR OWN AIR GUARD.

THERE'S MORE:
THE POWER PACKS ON THE SUITS--I COULD BE WRONG--BUT I'VE SEEN THAT CONFIGURATION IN OLD CATALOGS...
...FROM STARK INDUSTRIES.
STARK? THE WAKANDAN AIR GUARD?
THE ATTACK ON US. THE ATTACK ON MY BROTHER... THERE HAS TO BE A CONNECTION.
FIND ONE.
"MY PRINCE, I SHOULD BE GOING WITH YOU."

NO, MY FRIEND. I NEED A LITTLE TIME TO MYSELF.
THEY'RE EXPECTING YOU...
CLICK!

BELOVED!
BELOVED!
BELOVED!
ADORED ONES...
WE HAVE WORK TO DO.
TO BE CONTINUED...

WHO SCANNED IT?

WHO CARES?

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